

CONSENT FORMS MAY NOW BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY TO THE CLERK OF THE COURT. If a party elects to complete the consent form, counsel may log into the Case Management/Electronic Case File (CM/ECF) system, select the Magistrate Judge Consent Form event, and electronically prepare and submit the form. In the alternative, counsel may complete the attached consent form and mail it to the Clerk of the Court. Do NOT electronically file the consent form into the record. If you have any questions about electronic consent submission, please contact the Clerk's Office.

If a party elects to complete the form requesting reassignment to a district judge, counsel must complete the attached form and mail it to the Clerk's Office. There is no option to log into CM/ECF and electronically submit the reassignment form. Do NOT electronically file the reassignment form into the record.

DONE this 26th day of October, 2018.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G3' with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

GRAY M. BORDEN
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF ALABAMA

**EXPLANATION OF ASSIGNMENT TO
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE**

This civil case has been randomly assigned to a United States Magistrate Judge of the court. In accordance with 28 U.S.C. § 636(c), the Magistrate Judges of the court are designated to conduct any and all proceedings in a jury or non-jury civil case and order the entry of final judgment upon the consent of all parties to a case. Any appeal from a judgment entered by a Magistrate Judge is taken directly to the United States Court of Appeal for the Eleventh Circuit in the same manner as any appeal from any judgment entered in this court.

There are advantages to consenting to a Magistrate Judge. The principal one is that the Magistrate Judges have fewer civil case assignments than do the District Judges and may therefore be able to place you on a less crowded term or otherwise resolve your case more quickly. As you know, the Middle District is in a judicial emergency with only one active District Judge for a three-judge court. The district court docket is very congested, and visiting District Judges from other locations throughout the country are being assigned to preside in some cases in which the parties do not consent. The parties are therefore encouraged to consider consenting to a local Magistrate Judge as an alternative in order to move cases along while judicial resources are very limited. All of our Magistrate Judges have substantial experience in managing and trying civil cases; they are extremely competent and knowledgeable in the law and relevant civil procedures.

As a party to this lawsuit, you have the right to consent or to decline to consent to the jurisdiction of a Magistrate Judge. Litigants, without concern for any adverse consequences, freely may decline to consent to the jurisdiction of a Magistrate Judge. If you decline to consent to a Magistrate Judge, this case will be reassigned randomly to a District Judge.